

## NUMBER 1

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# THE TRUE AMERICAN.

"GOD AND LIBERTY."

LEXINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 3.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.—Some of the ablest statesmen and scholars of this State, have agreed to assist in editing this paper, and as my pursuits will not always allow me to revise and comment upon their editorials, some diversity of opinion, upon the great questions at issue, will necessarily occur.

C. M. CLAY.

All who have paid for the True American, in advance, shall be furnished with receipts in the next number.

CITY SUBSCRIBERS.—Until the carrier becomes fully acquainted with his route and the places at which papers are to be left in the city, he will probably fail to furnish some of our city subscribers. Every one who may happen to be thus neglected will please call and make the fact immediately known, and give directions where his paper shall be deposited.

Since the proposition to publish this paper was made, events have transpired which sink our original design, important as we deemed it, into utter insignificance, compared with the great principles which are now at issue.

The question is now no longer, whether six hundred thousand Kentuckians shall postpone their true property to the real or supposed interests of some thirty-one thousand slaveholders, but whether they are prepared to yield up, absolutely, all their liberties, and submit themselves willing slaves to a despotic and irresponsible minority. The slave party have undertaken to say, not that they claim the Constitution as the title-deed to their slaves, which no man can cancel until the very foundations of the Government be forcibly overthrown, or peaceably changed by legal means, through the omnipotent will of the majority—but themselves trampling under foot all the vital principles of that Constitution—they set at defiance its special injunctions, by an anarchical and revolutionary power—violating natural right, Divine Revelation, and the conscience of the civilized world.

The representatives of this faction, "Junius," in the Observer & Reporter, and a "Whig" and Robert Wickliffe, in the Kentucky Gazette, whose letters we publish to-day, have more or less taken the ground that the subject of slavery shall not be discussed, and that violence shall suppress our press.

Here, upon this issue, then, we take our stand, and are ready to "try conclusions" with these gentlemen, before a gallant people, in the face of the world. We most frankly admit that we are not so Quixotic as to seek a fight with a mob; we know that we can be overpowered by numbers; yet, from the defence of our known rights, we are not to be deterred by vague threats or real dangers, coming from any man or set of men. As we should deem ourselves a base citizen of a Commonwealth, if we were not prepared at all times, if necessary, to fall in the defence of our country against a foreign foe, so we shall ever fearlessly meet the treacherable and revolutionary enemies of Constitutional liberty at home. Though under the ban of popular proscription, baited by the widespread tongue of slander, and the relentless denunciations of men in power, set on by bands of hireling assassins, still, undismayed, planting ourselves upon the firm basis of our birthright Constitutional liberty, and the world-wide principles of truth and justice, we hurl back indignation defiance against these cowardly outlaws. We can die, but cannot be enslaved.

The Constitution of the United States, Article 1st, § 2, says: "Congress shall make no law \* \* \* abridging the freedom of speech or of the press." Article 10th, Section 7th, of the Kentucky Constitution, declares that, "The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may freely speak, write, or print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty." Now every tyrant in the lowest attorney's office knows that this responsibility is for libel or treasonable matter, (if after the definition of treason in the Constitution of the United States, any thing less than "levying war," &c., could be considered punishable,) and to a "jury of our peers," as James Kent has no where denied, and not to a "mob," as Junius would have it. For, if this man, grossly ignorant as he is of the great principles of common law and natural right, had looked at the very next section [8] of the Kentucky Constitution, he might have saved himself from the ridicule and contempt, if not from the indignation of men.

If, then, Junius shall, single-handed, fall upon us when alone, and take our life and suppress our publications, he will be guilty of murder. If he shall come with numbers to back him, he will most probably find us, too, sustained by some Kentuckians who yet dare to be free—the contest in that event may aspire to the dignity of a civil war, in which we shall be found fighting in the cause of the Constitution and Liberty, and they in the cause of Slavery, in rebellion against both. In such a contest, I shall not fear the result:

"That point

"Regarding his own life makes him too Lord of his oppressors?" Still we are not men of blood, and to show the pacific that we are economical in that precious fluid, if nothing but a fight will satisfy this rampant knight of the apoplexy, we propose that he supercede this projected civil war by the less heroic, but more harmless mode of the duel. If he slay us, the press shall stop; if we slay him, then never shall doctor's lancet draw blood more. Here, I confess, I make but little show of courage, for I fall in with the opinion which generally prevails among my own gallant countrymen, that non-violence are inevitable comrades. Genuine bravery and magnanimity ever go together.

and a man of large, chivalric soul, to take odds against a single foe. "No sutor ultrix eripiam." Let Junius stick to his bolus; there is more death in his mortar than in his sword; none but unresisting victims mark his prowess. A man outwitted from the social circle by his infamy, may well aspire to become a cut-throat, if numbers should ensure him his wonted impunity in the perpetration of crime. I should rather judge "A Whig," from his hesitating tone, to be a tame and harmless villain, and we can hardly waste indignation enough to repeat,

"Thou cream faced loon,

"Where gottest thou that goose look?"

Of all men living, Robert Wickliffe should be the last to speak of popular vengeance. He stands a living, but ungrateful monument of the forbearing mercy of the people. The victims of incendiary publications have not yet imbued their hands in the blood of this man, who for years has not scrupled to aggrandize his political power by the most dangerous insinuations against the lives and property of the community. The armies of men, women and children whom he has robbed by the dishonest jugglery of the law—men who have seen the beds stripped from sick and helpless women—bread from the mouths of crying infants—the plough-slave run sacrilegiously over the buried ashes of their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and children, by this inexorable fiend of the law, have not come up in mass, in their great and renealed woe, and thrown his torn limbs to the dogs; and yet he stands, at the age of seventy, advocating violence. Let this old man beware! Does he want another family picture spread out upon those walls, built up by the tears and blood of the poor and oppressed, whose cries for redress and vengeance, he confesses, shakes him in his guilty home.

Here midst the settled gloom which rests upon a house forever dishonored, may be seen DICKENSBIDGE, returning after a long exile of patient wrong and unresisting persecution, and with one fell blow, crushing into the lowest depths of infamy, the man whom the sternest follower of the long suffering Martyr of Judea, could no longer look upon and live unavenged.

Here is HENRY CLAY, of Ashland, his friend in the days of his deepest woe, who saved the only one of his race worthy of such a champion from a felon's death—the blood flows from a thousand wounds inflicted by the tooth of cruel and remorseless slander, foremost among the bloodhounds who thrust their insatiate muzzles into his very life's blood, is Robert Wickliffe.

Here is a great and gallant and confiding party, who have stood by him in good and evil report, through a long life, conferring upon him its repeated, though undeserved honors, at last, in 1844, in the day of its greatest trial, he basely deserts and goes off, and he and his, to the enemy; and yet he, with a face of more than metal, dares insult a virtuous community by talking of double dealing in politicians!

Here is a young and lovely girl raped by a ruffian negro. When her imploring and streaming eyes were upturned to the one of the propounders of the law, asking vengeance for the violated purity of a virgin soul, he dared to strike a yet more deadly blow, by insinuating that this humble daughter of the people was a common prostitute. How can he talk of a mob, at this late day, without trembling at the remembrance of the popular indignation which had then well nigh executed on him the vengeance which his crimes so richly deserve.

When a citizen of Fayette was poisoned by that degraded population which he would make perpetual among us, who covertly and insidiously procured her pardon of the Executive of the State? And yet he ventures to impute to others the encouragement of rape and poison! Old man, remember poor Benning—remember Trotter, the avenger—remember Russell's cave—and if you still thirst for bloodshed and violence, the same blade that repelled the assaults of assassins, once more in self-defence, is ready to drink of the blood of the hireling horde of scoundrels and outlaws of the assassin-sire of assassins.

We pass from these men, whose frontless baseness has turned us from our purpose of avoiding, if possible, all personal controversies, to the great mass of slaveholders, whom they, I know, do not fairly represent. I beg them to remember, that the Constitution is the sole basis of slave tenure, as well as landed estate; they who have every thing to lose, and nothing to gain by revolution, in my humble judgment, should be the last to advocate the doctrine, "Save qui peccat," and cut loose from all Constitutional moorings. We are not anarchists or nigrans; we claim to be conservatives of the highest order; and for this reason and no other reason, than because we are such, we intend, if our humble life is spared, to look into the very bottom of this thing of slavery.

And see whether it be a safe foundation of prosperity to us and our children, or not. We come not to bring war, but peace—to save, not to destroy. We have no interests separate from those of the great mass of our fellow citizens. We intend to share their dangers, or rejoice in their rescue; but in good and evil report, we are enforced to abide the same destiny. We feel deeply the responsibility of our post; it strips us of all personal ambition and private ends; we ask, therefore, the just and patient forbearance of our countrymen. Far be it from us to wound, unnecessarily, their sensibilities, or to wantonly run counter to their rooted prejudices; but we are constrained to speak boldly and honestly, looking neither to the right nor to the left, in our search after truth; advocating our cause as if not Kentucky only, but all mankind were our judge, and posterity the jury of our award.

If we fail in our purposes, our friends shall not blush for us, nor our enemies lightly triumph. When our mission on earth shall have ended, it shall be said of us, if we attained not the high mark of our fondly cherished aspirations, we dared much, in our humble way, for the vindication of the liberties of men;—if we, by the stern and inexorable doom of fate, fell

short of the establishment of the right, we never, knowingly, defied it, we tried.

## LYNCH LAW.

The following extract from J. H. Green's account of a visit to the New York Auburn State prison, we commend to "Junius" and his comrades:

"I looked at the murderer and could scarcely believe my own eyes; yet the blood before me a living marvel. I have pledged secrecy as to his real name until after his execution. I interrogated him on his first crime in view, and how he became so hardened. He told me to remember the treatment he had received from the lynchers' lash at Vicksburg. I did, but my eyes could scarcely credit reality. He was known here in 1832, 3, 4, and the early part of '35, as a barkeeper in Vicksburg. He was never a shrewd card player, but at that time was considered an invulnerable youth. The coffee house he kept was covered by both with four others were executed on the 5th of July, 1835, by Lynch Law. Wyatt and three others were taken on the morning of the 7th, stripped and chained to the wall, and left to die. The first, who died, was the one who had been known as the barkeeper. He died in the morning of the 7th of July, with the boiling sun upon their mangled bodies. Two died in about two hours after they were set ashore. Wyatt and the other remained with their limbs and feet bound forty hours, suffering more than tongue can tell or pen describe, when they were picked up by some slave negroes, who started with the two survivors to their quarters. His companion died before they arrived. Wyatt survives to tell the horrors of the lynchers' lash. He told me seven murders had been committed by their unmerciful treatment of him, and one innocent man hung. I know his statements to be true, for I had known him before 1835, and his truth in other particulars cannot be doubted. He murdered his seventh man, for which crime he will be executed. I have another communication for your paper concerning the murder and his prospects in the world to come.

Yours truly, J. H. GREEN.

ACADEMY, April 19, 1845. The lynchings of the gamblers in Vicksburg has ever been regarded by reflecting men, as murder. It is vain for the perpetrators of that notorious crime, to tell us that these gamblers were outlaws and cut throats; the re were also there judges, jurors, police officers, and a populous country.—Those men, however abandoned, had thrown themselves upon the majesty of the law for defence, and by that law they should have fallen, or have stood forever intact. If a single citizen had have stolen in the night and stabbed the gamblers to the heart, when wrapped in slumber, the crime would have stood out in its real colors; a number of citizens going in mass, in open day, in overpowering odds, only in degree reduced the crime in the ratio of the number and armament of the offenders in comparison to the number and armament of the attacked. Crime is ever short sighted; in fact that conduct which the wise of all ages have marked as destructive of man's best interests, that is crime. The ends of this mob have never been attained; they thought to secure peace and security by violence, what was the result? Some of the best blood in Vicksburg was shed in that contest; the gamblers were ousted, but the blood of the murdered men still cries aloud from the ground for vengeance. It is said that this fraternity have sworn eternal enmity against Vicksburg. It has been burnt again and again, by these armed men, who have sprung up as from the sown Dragon's teeth, and no man can foretell the end of these woes that hang over the doomed city.—This convict confesses seven murders in consequence of this outrage—what else can men expect? they that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind!

Monstrous cruelty and wronger deed from crime, but on the contrary, by disturbing the elements of virtuous intent and religious faith, as well as the basis of wholesome public opinion, which with weak minds is too often the only rule of action, they quicken into life the worst passions and the foulest deeds. The theory of society is taken to be this: every man yields up to government his right of offence for any injury, and his right of defence, in all cases where it is possible for the strong arm of the law to come to the rescue; and the great law of self-defence does not exist except in extreme cases, when it is incumbent on the defendant to show that to have awaited the slow progress of the civil power would have been utter ruin, for which society could have made no amends. Now I take it that if these postulates be true, then in all cases, whatever, Lynch law is a crime of the darkest dye in organized society, and in no case justifiable. Or we may state the case thus: if any offence is punished by Lynch law, before it can be justified the lynchers must show that it is better that all society be dissolved, than that the offence should go unpunished. By this rule, the slayers of Uterback, (I believe this is the name of the man lynched by the Kentuckians near Cincinnati,) were murderers—because it was better that this murderer should have gone unwhipped of justice, than that all law should have been trampled under foot; or that the tacit covenant which every man has made with all the members of society, to yield up the right of offence or vengeance, should have been perfidiously and sacrilegiously broken. And when the murderers of Uterback say to us, what! should this man who had cut the throat of his fellow man, for the sake of gold, and left him for dead, go unwhipped of justice because the law had not anticipated just such a case? We say yes, and you yourselves have done in very fact what he in design merely attempted, and yet you are still yourselves unpunished—the very thing you complain of in others. Give back our savage life, the scalping knife, the poisoned arrow, the war club, the cave, the brushwood, the prairie grass, the sharpened spear of aggression, vengeance, and defence, or spread over the sacred panoply of inextinguishable eternal law. The great master of the human mind and heart surely never conceived that there could be a conservative principle in Lynch law—

Shylock. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

You have sworn many a purchased slave, You have sworn many a young dog, and mules, You use in sin and in slavery paths, Because you thought them—Shall I say to you, Let them be free, say many times over, and say it true? Why should they under bondage let their bodies Be made as of you, and let their bodies Be searched with such violence? You will answer me—So do I answer you, Let them be free, say many times over, and say it true. I deny me, if you will have it, There is no force in the decree of Venice. I stand for judgment, answer, shall I have it?

And again: Shylock. If you deny it, let the danger light Upon your charter and your city's freedom! Here this "damned inexorable dog" (to use the words of Gratiano) plotting the murder of old blood, of the wealthiest man

of the law, defies the omnipotent arm of the haughty republic!

Barnardo. And I beseech you, West once the law to your authority. To do a great right, do a little wrong; And curb this cruel devil of his will. A "Junius" is, except he had a soul.—But such was not the wisdom of the immortal poet. In the ever memorable words of Fortin, Lynch law finds its grave—no Junius nor banded outlaws can ever resurrect it from its sleep of death: Portia. It must not be: there is no power in Venice Can alter a decree established. 'Twill be recorded for a precedent: And many an error, by the same example, Will rush into the State. It cannot be.

We are under great obligations to a large portion of the American press for the very flattering notice which they have taken in advance of this paper. Among those in our own State, who have given us a favorable word, we have seen the Louisville Journal, the Courier and Democrat, the Shelby News, the Frankfort Commonwealth, the Farmer's Chronicle and the Bardonia Gazette.

HARRY I. BODLEY, Esq., of this City, has been appointed, by the Governor, Auditor of the State, vice BEN. SELBY, Sr., deceased.

The French House of Peers have passed an act for the gradual emancipation of all slaves in the colonial dominions of that power. It is denied certain that the deputies will concur in the passage of the act, and make it a law. The plan to be adopted, as provided in the bill, is the allowance of a certain portion of time to each slave, every week, in which to labor for himself, the proceeds to be appropriated to his ransom, until a sum sufficient shall have been accumulated.

"THE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRAT," is the title of a fine sheet just started in Manchester, N. H. It ably vindicates the late noble conduct of G. P. HALE, upon the annexation question—it shows the ground now occupied by Mr. HALE, was that of the N. H. Democracy, up to the assembling of the National Convention that nominated Mr. Polk. Success to the friends of liberty, no matter in what party found.

FATAL ACCIDENT.—A report reached here, by yesterday's mail, that a most dreadful accident had occurred on the Camden, New Jersey, race course. The expected race between Fashion and Peytona (the second meeting of those celebrated nags) had attracted an immense concourse of spectators; and the principal stand, three stories high, was literally filled to overflowing, with a dense mass of persons, among them many ladies. At the moment when the horses were brought to the post, and were on the eve of starting, the above named stand fell to the earth, with a loud crash, killing and maiming a great number of the unfortunate beings who fell with it. The number killed is variously reported at from 50 to 200, and those who had limbs and bones broken, and otherwise injured, there has been no computation. The loss of life and injuries sustained were horrible to think of. The race was postponed in consequence of this sad occurrence.

From the Observer and Reporter. MR. WICKLIFFE.

Sir:—In calling the attention of the public to a report of Mr. Wm. C. Bell's speech in the Abolition Convention lately held in the city of New York, where he is represented as my "partner" in the True American, you have, no doubt unintentionally, placed me in a false position. I have already written a card to the New York Tribune, disavowing any connection whatever with Mr. Bell's sentiments upon Infidelity and Abolition. I deem it only necessary to say now, that Mr. Bell is not our partner in any respect—he has no interest in the paper whatever, and no more part in conducting it than you have. It is well known to this community that I have ever stood for the Union; and if I have ever been tautologous upon any subject, it has been upon this; often giving way to my profound sense of the necessity of the Union to the preservation of our liberties and national glory, at the expense of good taste in composition. Although no man is more sensible than I am of the evils of slavery, it has never been consistent with my real feelings or ideas of true policy to deal in indiscriminate denunciation of slaveholders. One may very well feel acutely the violation of general principles, and yet deeply sympathize with the self made victims of error—the man who inflicts evil is more to be pitied than the one who suffers it. Such at least is my own experience.

With regard to the Christian religion it is not necessary that I should defend myself, farther than by saying, that I am not aware that there is any man in Kentucky, not a member of any association of Christians, who has given sanction to the pecuniary support of the church as I have. I utterly despise hypocritical rant upon any subject; I believe my ideas of God and nature are fixed, and I have no desire to change them, yet I will say that there is not a precept of the Christian religion which does not meet a deep response in every power of my intellect, in every sensation of my heart; the rewards and consolations it holds out to the poor, the long suffering, the afflicted, the oppressed; its sublime sentiments of love, forgiveness and self-denial; its glorious aspirations of perfection, knowledge and immortality, prove it, if not Divine, at least our highest conception of Divinity. In fine, although I am tolerant of the opinions of all men on all subjects, I do not hesitate to avow that I have no sympathy whatever with Infidelity; on the contrary it shall ever be as it always has been, one of the objects of my life, to persuade men to a loftier appreciation of true Christianity, as the best basis of human happiness, true glory, liberty and civilization.

C. M. CLAY. Lexington, Ky., May 28th, 1845. The Crowned Heads—Paris, in the month of August next, will exhibit the imposing and exciting spectacle of no less than six crowned heads at one and the same time, viz. Louis Philippe himself, the Queen of England, the King of the Belgians, the King of Naples, the Queen of Spain, and the King of Holland. Louis Philippe, the

Mr. M. CLAY.—A paper published writes to us in the following terms:—

Messrs. Editors:—I desire that you can a vote of Censure. I have prepared to take his course in relation to the above shipped to, and sold at New Orleans. I am an advocate of slavery, and believe Kentucky can never realize her great natural advantage, till she has freed this burden. But let us judge Mr. Clay from his own letter:—"A slave, named Emily, I have every reason to believe, in 1843, killed with poison, our infant child, and again in 1845, attempted to poison our daughter, whom she is now in the Lexington jail, subject to the laws of the country. Her mother, and brother, and daughter, I sent to New Orleans, and sold them there, because I knew them to be victims of the crime of Emphy, and because in so doing, I was fulfilling the desire of my father, whose will, as executor, I am bound by oath to fulfill. His language being, 'I recommend in all cases where slaves behave amiss, that they should be sold.'" Emily was one of the true slaves. He had every reason to believe she had been guilty of murder. Her mother, and brother, and daughter, he knew to be abettors of her crime. The first where he did not know, but believed in her guilt, he sends her to jail, to suffer the penalty of the law, as a murderer. The mother, brother and daughter, whom he knew to be abettors, he sends to New Orleans for sale, regardless of their propensity to shed murder; not regarding the lives of others, if his own family be free from danger.—For the reputation of Emphy, and because in so doing, I was fulfilling the desire of my father, whose will, as executor, I am bound by oath to fulfill. His language being, 'I recommend in all cases where slaves behave amiss, that they should be sold.'" Emily was one of the true slaves. He had every reason to believe she had been guilty of murder. Her mother, and brother, and daughter, he knew to be abettors of her crime. 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